



Presentation Leaflet for  
**Initiative #StOpE**

Fighting against everyday sexism



# INTRODUCTION

Companies, schools and organizations are already very invested in corporate social responsibility in general, and in equal opportunities and equality between women and men in particular.

Our business communities are now shifting their focus to a more specific issue: respect and recognition for women and men in the workplace. That's why we need to pay special attention to manifestations of "everyday" sexism.

By that, we mean signs gestures, language and behavior that insidiously and sometimes underhandedly destabilize, patronize, discredit and even disqualify women in job markets, and sometimes corner women into self-censorship.

These attitudes aren't just squandering energy, stifling potential and spoiling quality of life at work in our organizations: they are also causing suffering among the people who work with us.

That's why we felt it was important to gather the organizations that want to do more to tackle this issue and to produce this booklet containing best practices that will spur down-to-earth initiatives to address everyday sexism.

This work is placed under the High Patronage of Isabelle Rome, Minister Delegate to the Prime Minister in charge of Equality between Women and Men, Diversity and Equal Opportunities.

It is conducted in partnership with Birgitte Grésy, an expert in equality and sexism in the workplace.

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# DEFINITION OF EVERYDAY SEXISM

Everyday sexism in the workplace encompasses all the attitudes, language and behavior rooted in gender-related stereotypes directly or indirectly targeting a person or group on account of their gender. While they may seem harmless, they intentionally or incidentally, consciously or unconsciously, underhandedly or even well-meaningly discredit and belittle people or groups and alter their physical or mental health.

Manifestations in everyday situations include sexist jokes and comments, remarks relating to maternity, negative stereotypes, rudeness and other signs of disrespect, unsolicited compliments or criticism relating to someone's physical appearance, and exclusion.

## Sources:

- *Le sexisme dans le monde du travail : entre déni et réalité.* Brigitte Grésy and Marie Becker. French High Council for professional equality between women and men, Ministry of Social Affairs, Health and Women's Rights. March 2015.
- *Kit pour agir contre le sexisme.* French High Council for professional equality between women and men. February 2017.

The definition of sexist acts in Article L. 1142-2-1 of the French labor code: "No one shall be subjected to sexist acts, defined as any and all acts relating to a person's gender which intentionally or incidentally affect his or her dignity or create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment."

# TAKE ACTION FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN THE WORKPLACE

## Commitment of the signatories

Under the High Patronage of Isabelle Rome, Minister Delegate to the Prime Minister in charge of Equality between Women and Men, Diversity and Equal Opportunities

Our companies are developing, innovating, investing and marketing products and services that address our customers' needs in France and worldwide. Our long-term growth, industrial and business success and ability to create lasting value rely on the talent of the women and men who work with us day after day at every one of our sites.

Our companies, schools and associations are also a reflection of their society. And society sometimes harbors collective representations or behavior that cause inequality, discrimination and possibly violence. One example of this is everyday sexism: in some common workplace situations, it transpires unintentionally or insidiously in words, gestures, behavior or acts that sideline or exclude women, or treat them as inferior.

Through the **#StOpE initiative**, we are committing to push back against everyday sexism in our organizations: it is our responsibility as employers, under our obligation to keep our employees safe and secure; and it is our collective duty to provide working environments where our employees can build their career and put their skills to use without constraints, fears or barriers.

# ACT OF COMMITMENT

## Fighting against everyday sexism

Through this initiative, as organizations to sign this agreement, we pledge to take action on one or more of the following priorities during the coming year:

01	<b>Display and apply</b> the zero-tolerance principle
02	<b>Raise awareness</b> of sexist behavior (acts, words, attitudes) and their impacts
03	Provide targeted <b>training</b> on obligations and best practices related to fighting everyday sexism
04	<b>Circulate</b> educational material to help employees address sexist behavior in the company
05	<b>Encourage</b> all employees to contribute, i.e. prevent and identify sexist behavior, and respond when facing with everyday sexism
06	<b>Prevent</b> situations involving sexism; provide individual support for victims and witnesses so that they can report sexist behavior, and for decision-makers so that they can address it
07	<b>Punish</b> reprehensible behavior, communicate on the associated disciplinary measures
08	<b>Measure</b> and introduce indicators to monitor progress and adapt the policy to fight against everyday sexism



*"Do you feel you can do it?  
What does your husband  
think?"*

*"She's pregnant-again / She's  
always getting pregnant."*



*"I keep trying to promote  
women, even though these  
jobs are technical."*



*"Listen, Melany, this negotiation is  
going to get ugly. Do you want a  
testosterone shot?"*



*"Oh yes, I keep forgetting she  
takes Wednesdays off to be  
with her kids."*



# 01

## **DISPLAY AND APPLY THE ZERO-TOLERANCE PRINCIPLE**

### Best Practices

Establish what kind of behavior is out of line and communicate on it.

Circulate examples of zero-tolerance plans that leaders have put in place.

Mention sexism explicitly in official documents.

Promote managerial best practices and role models with a view to spurring action against everyday sexism.

# 02

## **RAISE AWARENESS OF SEXIST BEHAVIOR (ACTS, WORDS, ATTITUDES) AND THEIR IMPACTS**

### Best Practices

Communicate on the definition of sexism, its causes and its consequences (e.g. in guides, online or offline literature, videos, etc.).

Roll out a communication plan to raise awareness of everyday sexism and to provide pointers to detect it (e.g. with posters, 'verbatim frescos', etc.).

Build participative communication campaigns (e.g. on the corporate social network, a wall containing sexist comments, etc.).

Use yearly milestones to talk about everyday sexism in the workplace (e.g. celebrate International Women's Day, etc.).



# 03

## **PROVIDE TARGETED TRAINING ON THE OBLIGATIONS AND BEST PRACTICES RELATED TO FIGHTING EVERYDAY SEXISM**

### Best Practices

Create an interactive online module explaining what everyday sexism is, circulate it to all employees.

Raise manager and recruitment officer awareness of gender-related stereotypes in H.R. processes (recruitment, career development).

Use edutaining methods to provide examples of sexist behavior (e.g. role-play exercises, etc.).

Add sexism to all induction training courses for newcomers and include the issue in training for managers.

Discuss sexism during training courses and other mechanisms for employee development (coaching, mentoring, co-development).

# 04

## **CIRCULATE EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL TO HELP EMPLOYEES ADDRESS SEXIST BEHAVIOR IN THE COMPANY**

### Best Practices

Train and equip women to address instances of everyday sexism in the workplace.

Supply toolboxes including a booklet explaining how employees should react when they are subjected to or witness sexist behavior (e.g. kits, expert guides, etc.).

Train employees in the right way to respond when they directly or indirectly witness sexist behavior.

# 05

## **ENCOURAGE ALL EMPLOYEES TO CONTRIBUTE, I.E. PREVENT AND IDENTIFY SEXIST BEHAVIOR, AND RESPOND WHEN FACING WITH EVERYDAY SEXISM**

### Best Practices

Commend virtuous behavior, and individual and team initiatives aimed at preventing, identifying and responding to everyday sexism.

Encourage employees to create networks/communities to foster diversity, sorority and mutual support, and to help them detect sexist attitudes.

Open up channels for conversations, encourage people to come forward and share their experiences of everyday sexism.

Develop high-visibility, high-impact measures to address everyday sexism (e.g. a red-card system, a prize for the best short film including messages from men and women leaders and employees, etc.).

# 06

## **PREVENT SITUATIONS INVOLVING SEXISM; PROVIDE INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS AND WITNESSES SO THAT THEY CAN REPORT SEXIST BEHAVIOR, AND FOR DECISION-MAKERS SO THAT THEY CAN ADDRESS IT**

### Best Practices

Train designated H.R. correspondents and employee representatives to deal with sexist behavior, and lend assistance when they need to do so; involve unions in these measures.

Set up a whistleblowing mechanism to report sexist behavior and a service to support victims (e.g. an anonymous, confidential and free-of-charge outside helpline, etc.).

Ensure reports are anonymous and confidential so that the reported situations can be addressed efficiently and effectively.

Communicate clearly on the mechanisms that victims and witnesses can use to report sexism and where they can find support. Provide the names of the correspondents along with information about their duties and mandate.

Include the issue of everyday sexism in job-related interviews.

# 07

## **PUNISH REPREHENSIBLE BEHAVIOR, COMMUNICATE ON THE ASSOCIATED DISCIPLINARY MEASURES**

### Best Practices

Take appropriate disciplinary measures as swiftly as possible, make sure they are proportional to the offense.

Communicate on disciplinary measures taken in response to out-of-line behavior.

# 08

## **MEASURE AND INTRODUCE INDICATORS TO MONITOR PROGRESS AND ADAPT THE POLICY TO FIGHT AGAINST EVERYDAY SEXISM**

### Best Practices

Set up metrics to track sexist behavior in the company.

Forward the metrics to top management on a regular basis, make sure reports on experiences involving sexism reach the right level in the hierarchy so that the action plan can be adapted if and as required.

Include issues relating to everyday sexism in employee perception surveys and/or barometers, or set up specific tools to provide metrics on these issues.

# initiative #StOpE

“I am not the woman  
president of Harvard. I am  
the president of Harvard”

Drew Gilpin Faust  
President of Harvard

Initiative #StOpE is coordinated by the Association Française des Managers de la Diversité.

## Contact

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